

Appl. No. 10/603,380  
Amdt. dated February 22, 2005  
Reply to Final Office Action of December 20, 2004

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

#### Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A device for securing and adjusting laces, cords, and strings, comprising:

a body having a top surface, a bottom surface, and a perimeter, said body provided with at least two apertures positioned laterally on opposite sides of a center of said body, said body further being provided with at least one aperture positioned near the center of said body, said at least one central aperture comprising at least four sides and forming at least two wedge angles facing each lateral aperture, wherein said at least two lateral apertures and said at least one central aperture are aligned on a longitudinal axis.

Claim 2 (original): The device according to claim 1, wherein the configuration of said perimeter is selected from the group consisting of: oval, rectangular, trapezoidal, circular, polygonal, and irregular curve-shape.

Claim 3 (canceled)

Claim 4 (original): The device according to claim 1, wherein the configuration of said lateral apertures is selected from the group consisting of: oval, circular, triangular, square, and rectangular.

Claim 5 (original): The device according to claim 1, wherein said top surface and said bottom surface are separated by a constant depth.

Claim 6 (original): The device according to claim 1, wherein said top surface and said bottom surface are separated by a variable depth.

**BEST AVAILABLE COPY**

Appl. No. 10/603,380  
Amdt. dated February 22, 2005  
Reply to Final Office Action of December 20, 2004

Claim 7 (original): The device according to claim 1, wherein said central aperture comprises four sides of equal length forming the shape of a diamond.

Claim 8 (original): The device according to claim 7, wherein said central aperture further comprises:

- (a) two congruent wedge angles opposite each other on a horizontal axis; and
- (b) two congruent angles opposite each other on a vertical axis.

Claim 9 (original): The device according to claim 8, wherein said congruent wedge angles are from 5° to 110°.

Claim 10 (original): The device according to claim 8, wherein said congruent wedge angles are more than 10° and less than 95°.

Claim 11 (original): The device according to claim 8, wherein said congruent wedge angles are more than 15° and less than 80°.

Claim 12 (original): The device according to claim 8, wherein said congruent wedge angles are from 20° to 60°.

Claim 13 (canceled)

Claim 14 (original): The device according to claim 3, wherein said longitudinal axis is positioned at a same distance from a first edge and a second edge of said body.

Claim 15 (original): The device according to claim 3, wherein said longitudinal axis is positioned at a different distance from said first edge and said second edge of said body.

Claim 16 (canceled)

Appl. No. 10/603,380  
Amdt. dated February 22, 2005  
Reply to Final Office Action of December 20, 2004

Claim 17 (currently amended): The device according to claim [[16]] 22, wherein said triangular-shaped central apertures comprise congruent wedge angles measuring within a range from 5° to 110°.

Claim 18 (original): The device according to claim 1, wherein said body further comprises at least two cone-shaped central apertures positioned near the center of said body.

Claim 19 (original): The device according to claim 1, wherein said central aperture further comprises an inner wall that is perpendicular to said top or bottom surfaces.

Claim 20 (original): The device according to claim 1, wherein said central aperture further comprises an inner wall that forms an acute angle with one of said top or bottom surfaces.

Claim 21 (new): A device for securing and adjusting laces, cords, and strings, comprising:  
a body having a top surface, a bottom surface, and a perimeter, said body provided with at least two apertures positioned laterally on opposite sides of a center of said body, said body further being provided with at least one aperture positioned near the center of said body, said at least one central aperture comprising at least four sides and forming at least two wedge angles facing each lateral aperture, wherein said at least one central aperture further comprises:  
(a) four sides having unequal lengths forming the shape of a quadrilateral;  
(b) two congruent wedge angles opposite each other on a horizontal axis; and  
(c) two non-congruent angles opposite each other on a vertical axis.

Claim 22 (new): A device for securing and adjusting laces, cords, and strings, comprising:  
a body having a top surface, a bottom surface, and a perimeter, said body provided with at least two apertures positioned laterally on opposite sides of a center of said body, and said body further being provided with at least two triangular-shaped central apertures positioned near the center of said body.

**This Page is Inserted by IFW Indexing and Scanning  
Operations and is not part of the Official Record**

**BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES**

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images include but are not limited to the items checked:

- ☐ BLACK BORDERS
- ☐ IMAGE CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES
- ☐ FADED TEXT OR DRAWING
- ☐ BLURRED OR ILLEGIBLE TEXT OR DRAWING
- ☐ SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES
- ☐ COLOR OR BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS
- ☐ GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS
- ☒ LINES OR MARKS ON ORIGINAL DOCUMENT
- ☐ REFERENCE(S) OR EXHIBIT(S) SUBMITTED ARE POOR QUALITY
- ☐ OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

**IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.**

**As rescanning these documents will not correct the image problems checked, please do not report these problems to the IFW Image Problem Mailbox.**